

Message Text

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O R 300610Z JUN 78
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6326
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
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AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
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AMEMBASSY PARIS
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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KIGALI 1053

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, RW
SUBJECT: AFRICA POLICY: "UNREALISTIS" SAYS RWANDAN FONMIN

REF STATE 153145

1. SUMMARY: FONMIN NSEKALIJE APPRECIATED OUR SINCERITY
IN WISHING TO STRENGTHEN AFRICANS' ABILITY TO SOLVE OWN
PROBLEMS WITHOUT COLD WAR ENTANGLEMENTS, BUT HE VIEWED
PROSPECTS DIMLY. IN PAIN TERMS, AFRICANS ARE NOT ABLE
TO MANAGE INDEPENDENCE, AND "AFRICA FOR AFRICANS" IS
EMPTY SLOGANEERING. POST-COLONIAL AFRICA IS A VACUUM,
A JUMBLED ASSORTMENT OF NON-VIABLE ENTITIES GRASPING
FOR HELP IN ALL DIRECTIONS; SOVIETS/CUBANS RECOGNIZE
THIS AND ARE MOVIN RAPIDLY TO FILL VOID WITH "HELP,"
HOWEVER DUBIOUS ITS VALUE. WEST IS MEANWHILE LOSING
GROUND WHILE IT FIDDLES WITH FUTILE PROBLEM-SOLVING
SCHEMES, USEFUL ONLY IN EVADING REAL RESPONSIBILITY AND
ASSUAGING SENSE OF GUILT TOWARD AFRICA. IN FONMIN'S VIEW,

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ONLY DIRECT AND AFFIRMATIVE ECON/CULTURAL/SOCIAL "INTER-
VENTION" BY WEST CAN HEAD OFF SOVIETS. WE DISAGREE WITH HIS
BLEAK OUTLOOK BUT SEE SOME IMPORTANT LESSONS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN OUR FIRST EXTENDED CHAT SINCE SHABA (WHEN
NSEKALIJE WARNED THAT GOR WOULD JUDGE US ON BASIS OF
ITS RESPONSE TO THAT CRISIS -- KIGALI 745), I TOOK OPPOR-

TUNITY TO SURVEY SOVIET/CUBAN INTERVENTION QUESTION
GENERALLY AND TO STRESS OUR CONCERN THAT AFRICAN NATIONS
BE ALLOWED TO SOLVE PROBLEMS WITHOUT FOREIGN MEDDLING. I
READ TO FONMIN SECTION OF SECRETARY VANCE'S JUNE 20 SPEECH
UNDERSCORING THESE POINTS, AND I ALSO MENTIONED AMB
YOUNG'S SUGGESTION THAT WE PURSUE WITH AFRICAN LEADERS
VARIOUS MEANS OF STRENGTHENING AFRICAN PROBLEM-SOLVING
MECHANISMS THROUGH OAU AND ELSEWHERE (REFTEL).

3. NSEKALIJE'S RESPONSE WAS DISHEARTENINGLY PESSIMISTIC.
PROCLAIMING HIMSELF A MEMBER OF WHAT HE TERMED THE
"BRZEZINSKI CAMP", FONMIN SAID IT WAS NOW MUCH TOO LATE
FOR SUCH THEORETICAL, MILITARY-SCHOOL EXERCISES. CITING
NAPOLEON, HE SAID WEST HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RESPOND
SWIFTLY AND FORCEFULLY TO SOVIET CHALLENGES HWEREVER THEY
OCCURRED. SUDDEN, PREMATURE DEPARTURE OF COLONIAL POWERS
DURING 'SIXTIES, TAKING WITH THEM ECON/CULTURAL INFLUENCE
WHICH HAD NOT YET FIRMLY ROOTED IN AFRICAN SOIL, LEFT
CONTINENTAL VACUUM NOW NEARLY FILLED BY "SOCIALISTS."
WHILE US AND WESTERN ALLIES EXCHANGED HIGH-MINDED
SLOGANS ABOUT "AFRICA FOR AFRICANS," SOVIETS AND THEIR
FRIENDS WERE RAPIDLY EXPLOITING "REALITY" OF CONTINUED
AFRICAN DEPENDENCE ON OUTSIDERS. EVEN NOW, WHILE WE
FIDDLER WITH REFORMING OAU, HE SAID, SOVIETS WERE MOVING
SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS INTO ANGOLA TO FREE CUBANS TO MOVE
ON TO RHODESIAN CONFLICT (HE ASSERTED THESE MANEUVERS
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WERE DELIBERATELY TIMED TO INFLUENCE OAU CHIEFS OF STATE
AT KHARTOUM SUMMIT NEXT MONTH).

4. NSEKALIJE THEN TOOK ME OVER TO GLOBE TO SHOW HOW
VACUUM WAS FILLING WITH REGIMES UNFRIENDLY TO WEST AND
ITS VALUES, POINTING OUT SEVERAL HE EXPECTED WOULD SOON
BE ADDED TO THAT LIST: MOROCCO, EGYPT, MAURITANIA, CHAD,
KENYA, ZAIRE. HE PRAISED OUR HIGH-MINDED INTENTIONS IN
PERSERVERING WITH ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN FOR ZIMBABWE BUT
"REALISTICALLY" VIEWED CHANCES FOR SUCCESS AS HOPELESS.
NO SIMILARLY DISMISSED POSSIBILITIES FOR RAPPROCHEMENT
BETWEEN ANGOLA AND ZAIRE, OUR MEDIATION EFFORTS NOTWITH-
STANDING: ANGOLANS WERE BIDDING TIME UNTIL MOBUTU FINALLY
FELL -- THEIR OBJECTIVE WAS AN EVENTUAL TRIANGULAR LEFTIST
ALLIANCE WITH CONGO-BRAZZA AND POST-MOBUTU ZAIRE -- AND
LUANDA WOULD NEVER ABIDE BY AN ACCOMMODATION WHOSE EFFECT
WOULD BE TO POSTPONE THAT FALL. "COLOR YOUR FRIENDS BLUE
AND THEIRS RED," HE SAID POINTING AGAIN TO GLOBE, "AND
SEE HOW AFRICAN VACUUM IS FILLING TO YOUR DISADVANTAGE."

5. I REFUSED TO BUY NSEKALIJE'S DISMAL VIEW AND INSISTED
THAT OUTLOOK FOR WESTERN RELATIONS WITH AFRICAN STATES

WAS LESS HOPELESS THAN HE DEPICTED. WE MAINTAINED WORKING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH MANY COUNTRIES WHICH HE WROTE OFF TO THE "SOCIALISTS," AND IN SOME NOTABLE CASES OUR TIES WERE ACTUALLY GROWING STRONGER -- CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S AFRICA EMPHASIS AND MEDIATION EFFORTS HAD WON US CREDIBILITY AND INFLUENCE IN THESE QUARTERS WE HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY ENJOYED. I ALSO CHIDED NSEKALIJE FOR PERSISTING IN AFRICAN DEPENDENCY VIEWS WHICH IS OAU COLLEAGUES MUST FIND ANATHEMA (HE SAID THEY WERE SHARED BY MORE THAN A FEW, AT LEAST IN PRIVATE) AND WHICH IMPLIED NEED FOR OUTSIDE TUTELARY ROLE NO LONGER PALATABLE TO WEST.

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6. UNFAZED BY WHAT SEEMED TO HIM BOY SCOUT ETHICS OF AMERICANS, NSEKALIJE QUOTED (VERBATIM) DEMOSTHENES SPEECH WARNING ATHENIANS THAT ENEMY WAS ALREADY AT GATES AND THAT TIMEFOR DEBATE WAS OVER. "AFRICA FOR AFRICANS" IS NOTHING BUT A POLITICAL SLOGAN USED TO ASSUAGE GUILT FEELINGS AMONG WESTERNERS, HE CONTINUED, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHOSE SLAVERY OR COLONIAL PRACTICES CONTRIBUTED TO AFRICA'S WEAKNESS. BECAUSE THEY ARE SO WEAK, AFRICANS WIL NOT BE TRULY INDEPENDENT FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER 100 YEARS, AND WESTERNERS MUST RECOGNIZE AND ASSUME BURDEN OF FILLING VACUUM THEY LEFT BEHIND -- WITH WESTERN TRAINING, TECHNOLOGY, INDUSTRY, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND EVEN MILITARY HARDWARE -- OR ELSE SOCIALISTS WILL.

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7. COMMENT: MADDENING AS THEY ARE, NSEKALIJE'S REMARKS WERE WELL-INTENDED AND SINCERE. FONMIN IS NO HEAVY-WEIGHT THINKER, GOODNESS KNOWS, AND HE LOVES TO SHOCK WITH FRANK "REALISM" WHICH IN FACT SQUARES POORLY WITH REAL FACTS ELSEWHERE (HE OVERLOOKS RECENT POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS IN GUINEA, MOZAMBIQUE, CONGO-BRAZZA, AND EVEN ANGOLA). IN OUR OPINION, HIS FATALISTIC, DOOMSDAY OUTLOOK ILL SERVES HIS COUNTRY'S OWN BEST INTERESTS, NOT TO SAY ALL OF AFRICA'S, AND ONE IS TEMPTED TO DISMISS HIM AS A PERENNIAL NAY-SAYER WITH A SLAVE MENTALITY.

8. DISMISSING HIM WOULD BE EASIER IF (A) HE WERE THE ONLY RWANDAN LEADER HOLDING SUCH VIEWS (HE IS NOT), AND (B) THERE WERE NOT SOME SUBSTANCE TO HIS PORTRAIT OF HELPLESS AFRICAN DEPENDENCY (I FEAR THERE IS). HOWEVER POORLY IT MAY FIT WITH OUR OWN NOTION OF WHAT'S BEST FOR AFRICA, OTHER RWANDANS -- AND I SUSPECT OTHER AFRICANS -- SHARE HIS PESSIMISTIC VIEW OF A CONTINENT DEPOPULATED BY SLAVERS, DEMEANED BY COLONIALISM, DESTABILIZED BY RUSH TO INDEPENDENCE, AND NOW DISINHERITED BY WESTERN TUTORS AND UNABLE TO MUSTER STRENGTH INTERNALLY TO DEAL WITH SECRET

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ITS OWN PROBLEMS OR TO COPE WITH SINISTER FORCES FROM OUTSIDE. CLEARLY, NOT EVERYONE SHARES NYERERE'S SELF-CONFIDENCE, SENGHOR'S INTELLIGENCE, AHIDJO'S CLEVERNESS, OR NUMEIRI'S COURAGE.

9. SEEMS TO US, THEREFORE, THAT THERE ARE USEFUL LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM EVEN NSEKALIJE, AS WE SEARCH FOR WAYS TO STRENGTHEN AFRICANS' PROBLEM-SOLVING CAPABILITIES (REFTTEL):

A. "LEAVE IT TO THE AFRICANS" WON'T SUFFICE, AS AT LEAST SOME AFRICANS LACK THE MOST BASIC CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITIES TO MANAGE THEIR AFFAIRS INDEPENDENTLY AND WILL SURELY LOOK TO OTHERS FOR GUIDANCE IF WE REFUSE. DESPITE EVIDENCE TO CONTRARY, THIS GROUP BELIEVES THEY ARE TOO WEAK EVER TO BE MORE THAN PAWNS IN EAST-WEST CHESS GAME (MOST HERE ARE QUITE SURE THAT MOROCCAN/SENEGALESE/GABONESE/TOGOLESE AID TO ZAIRE IS BEING QUARTERBACKED BY FRANCE, IF NOT BY U.S.) AND ARE UNLIKELY TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES INDEPENDENTLY IN AFRICAN DISPUTES

UNLESS IT IS TO PLAY OFF ONE GREAT POWER AGAINST THE OTHER.

B. MYTH OF SOVIET INVINCIBILITY IS DEEPLY HELD, NOTWITHSTANDING GAINS OF OUR NEW AFRICA EMPHASIS. WE NEED TO DO A MUCH BETTER "PUBLIC DIPLOMACY" JOB, ADVERTISING NOT ONLY OUR OWN SUCCESSES BUT THOSE OF INDEPENDENT AFRICANS THEMSELVES (WESTERN MEDIA NATURALLY TEND TO OVERPLAY OUR SETBACKS, THUS FUELING MYTH OF SOVIET INVINCIBILITY).

C. WE HAD BETTER ACCEPT A LARGER ROLE ON AFRICAN STAGE AND PLAY IT TO THE HILT -- NOT MILITARILY, NECES-
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SARILY, BUT IN MANY OTHER WAYS WHICH DEMONSTRATE CONTINUING VITALITY OF WESTERN CULTURE. WE MUST BE DONE WITH VIETNAM GUILT, STAND UP FOR OUR OWN VALUES (AS DO SO MANY AFRICANS), AND ACCEPT NOTION THAT OUR "PRESENCE" IN AFRICA -- ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, CULTURAL, AND DIPLOMATIC -- CAN BE CONSTRUCTIVE AND BENEFICIAL, NOT SHAMEFUL.

D. FINALLY, WE MUST DEMONSTRATE TO AFRICANS THAT OUR ABILITY TO ACT EFFECTIVELY IN PURSUIT OF OUR OWN INTERESTS IS NOT TIED UP IN KNOTS BY CONGRESSIONAL RESTRAINTS OR BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE. ABOVE ALL, WE MUST FREE UP OUR AID PROGRAM FROM ITS PRESENT MORASS OF OVER-DETAILED STUDIES, COMPLEX DESIGNS, SOCIAL-MECHANICS EXPERIMENTATION, TECHNICIAN-LADEN IMPLEMENTATION, AND ENDLESS REVIEWS AND RECONSIDERATIONS TO ALLOW IT TO PRODUCE THE GOODS -- THE TANGIBLE AND SPEEDY TRANSFER OF RESOURCES BOTH CONGRESS AND AFRICANS LOOK FOR FROM AMERICAN AID.

10. IN ADDITION TO THESE CONSTRUCTIVE LESSONS, THERE IS AN OMINOUS SIDE TO NSEKALIJE OUTLOOK WORTH NOTING: RWANDANS AND OTHER POOREST-OF-THE-POOR FALL EASILY INTO CATAclysmic VIEW OF HISTORY BECAUSE THERE REAL OPTIONS ARE SO BLEAK AND DULL. BY ADOPTING RESPONSIBLE, WESTERN-ORIENTED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT, THEY CAN HOPE TO SEE THEIR ECONOMIES GROW PERHAPS BY MODEST 3 PERCENT -- NOWHERE NEAR TAKE-OFF OR SELF-SUFFICIENCY. IF IN DESPAIR THEY GO TO RADICAL EXTREMES, THEY CAN AT LEAST RAISE SOME HELL AND WIN SOME ATTENTION. SEEMS TO US THAT THE REAL TRICK TO ANZFLING EAQT-ZKLZQUY EYAQENTION" IS TO FIND MEANS OF GIVING POOR COUNTRIES HOPE THAT THEIR LOT WILL TRULY AND MATERIALLY IMPROVE THROUGH PRACTICAL EFFORTS AT COOPERATION AND MUTUAL PROBLEM-SOLVING -- AND HERE WE'RE BACK TO MAKING OUR AID PROGRAM EFFECTIVE.

11. WE HAVE ALSO LOOKED AT SPECIFIC PROBLEM-SOLVING

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APPROACHES ADVANCED BY AMB. YOUNG AND, WITHIN CONSTRAINTS
OUTLINED ABOVE, SEE GREAT MERIT IN EACH ONE:

-- EVEN NSEKALIJE LIKED IDEA OF COMMISSION OR CODE
OF CONDUCT TO DEAL WITH ETHNIC MINORITIES (IMMEDIATELY
APPLICABLE TO RWANDA);

-- I HAVE LONG BELIEVED WE ERR IN NOT ENCOURAGING
MORE IMMEDIATE USE OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL, BY
AFRICANS AND OTHERS, IN DEFUSING TENSIONS AND FINDING OUT
FACTS, AND WE SHOULD CERTAINLY INVOLVE COUNCIL ONE WAY OR
ANOTHER IN ANY SITUATION THREATENING TO REQUIRE OUR
DIRECT INTERVENTION;

-- NOR IS IT TOO LATE TO TAKE ANGOLA-ZAIRE TROUBLES
TO SECURITY COUNCIL, OR EVEN RHODESIA PROBLEM, IN ORDER
TO ASSURE F H
NS OF A VOICE AND A HEARING THERE.

12. ONE OTHER APPROACH NOT MENTIONED BY AMB. YOUNG RATES
HIGH ON OUR LIST: MORE ACTIVE, GENEROUS, AND ENTHUSI-
ASTIC SUPPORT TO AFRICAN SUB-REGIONAL ORGS LIKE OCAM
AND CEPGL, WHICH THOUGH NOT POLITICAL IN CHARACTER HAVE
IMPORTANT POTENTIAL FOR ENCOURAGING SPIRIT OF COOPERA-
TION AMONG MEMBERS. THROUGH FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL
SUPPORT TO SUCH ORGS, WHICH RWANDA AT LEAST VALUES WAY
AHEAD OF OAU IN TERMS OF DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL, AND
WHICH ARE SMALL ENOUGH TO BE GENUINELY MANAGEABLE BY
AFRICANS, WE CAN HELP OVERCOME "SLAVE MENTALITY"
OF DEPENDENT HELPLESSNESS LIKE NSEKALIJE'S AND HELP
BUILD SELF-CONFIDENCE NECESSARY TO EFFECTIVE PROBLEM-
SOLVING.

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